

Unanimity and Charity, the Characters of Christians.

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SERMON

Preached in the
Parish-Church of St. Sepulchre,
June 16th, 1709.

BEING

Thursday in Whitsun-Week,

At the Anniversary Meeting of the Children
Educated in the Charity-Schools, in and about the
Cities of LONDON and WESTMINSTER.

Published at the Request of several Gentlemen concern'd in
that Charity.

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Rector of St. Mary le Bow, and Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty. *Bp of Carlisle*

L O N D O N:

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Acts IV. Ver. xxxii.

*The multitude of them that believed,
were of one heart, and of one soul:
neither said any of them, that ought
of the things which he possessed, was
his own, but they had all things
common.*

BOTH the Season and the Occasion of the present Assembly led me to the choice of this Subject. 'Tis that Season in which we commemorate the Effusion of the divine Spirit upon the Apostles of our Lord, and the first Converts to Christianity, with the mighty influence thereof on the tempers and the manners of Christians at that time. And the special Occasion of our meeting here seems to me to present us with as fair a resemblance of the temper and the manners of those Christians, as ever has been seen from that time to this.

If Unanimity and Concord, both in divine Worship, and in carrying on designs for the glory of God and the good of our fellow-creatures; if Enlargedness of heart to-

wards men, particularly towards our Christian Brethren, with respect to their various necessities; if these were the Characters of Christians in the days of the Apostles; see here the very same Characters clearly legible to all Spectators: an Assembly of Christians, who have been lately celebrating the memory of the descent of the holy Ghost from Heaven, here met together, as influenc'd by the same divine Spirit, with one accord worshiping the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, some cheerfully imparting, others thankfully partaking both of spiritual and temporal good things, for the benefit of the whole Body.

Ver. 7. But to return to the Words themselves, the Occasion whereof was this. The Apostles St. Peter and St. John having been conven'd before the Sanhedrim, to give an account of a Miracle visibly wrought upon an impotent man, were threaten'd, and solemnly charged to preach to the people no more in the Name of Jesus, and so were dismiss'd. When they came to their own company, they reported what had pass'd; upon which the whole Assembly made their appeal to Almighty God Ver. 31. by a solemn Prayer, whereupon the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the holy Ghost, (just as before

before on the day of Pentecost;) and the effect of this was, first, that *they spake the word of God with boldness*, and then according to the words of my Text, that *the Multitude of them* Ver. 32. *that believed were of one heart, and of one soul: neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed, was his own, but they had all things common.*

The Method which I propose in treating on this Subject is this;

I. To observe the two great Characters of the whole Body of Christians at that time, viz. those of Unanimity and Charity.

II. To enquire in what manner and degree Christians in every age ought to resemble them in these Characters.

III. To propose the instance now before us, as yielding a fair Specimen of the same temper which appear'd to be in the Christians of those days, and a goodly resemblance of their Practice.

IV. To conclude with such Exhortation and Advice, as may be proper with respect to the present Occasion.

I begin with the first, viz.

I. To observe the two great Characters of the whole Body of Christians at that time, viz. those of Unanimity and Charity. As

As to the former, it is thus express'd, *The Multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul*, by which three things seem to be implied; a Concord in Judgment; an Agreement in divine Worship; and a joining together in promoting the same great and good design, namely the honouring of God by propagating the Gospel of his Son.

The Enemy had not yet sown the Seeds of Contention and Division amongst them. The Spirit of Peace and Concord did so powerfully influence their Souls, that it was in vain for him then to attempt it. They were all perfectly agreed in the great fundamental Articles of the christian Faith as taught by the Apostles; and they were not so weak as to contend about matters of smaller moment. They join'd yet with the rest of their Countreymen in worshiping the true God in the Temple, in hopes that they might by degrees bring them over to join with them in the christian Worship, which, after the Temple-Service was over, they withdrew to perform devoutly and unanimously amongst themselves. And the one great design which they all carried on with much diligence and zeal was the spreading abroad the Doctrine of the Gospel, and persuading others to embrace it, as they had done.

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'Tis true, that Contentions and Divisions too soon arose in the Church. There sprang up false Teachers, who made it their business to divide the Members of Christ's Body, and forasmuch as it was afterwards made up of two very differing sorts of people, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, they found many plausible pretences for making differences amongst them. But, as my Text sets before us the state of Christianity as purely primitive, so during the lives of the Apostles and their immediate Disciples and Followers, all that were worthy of the Name of Christians did in a remarkable manner maintain this primitive Character of Unanimity.

And then as to their Charity, as that word peculiarly denotes a communicative and liberal Disposition, my Text thus expresses it; *Neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.* And again in the following Verses, *Great grace was upon them all*; or, as some Ver. 33. render those Words agreeably to the Syriac Translation, *Great Charity or Liberality was among them all*; according to what is added immediately after, *Neither was there any among* 34. *them that lacked*; for as many as were Possessors of *Lands or Houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid* 35. *them*

them down at the Apostles feet ; and distribution was made unto every Man according as he had need.

This particular Method of exercising their Charity was indeed peculiar to the Church of Jerusalem, and at that Season only ; for which very good reasons have been assigned. The Jews who embraced Christianity did, according to our Saviour's Prediction, certainly expect the sudden Destruction of their City, and the Desolation of their Countrey, (which accordingly did come to pass, before that Generation passed away ;) and therefore they readily parted with their earthly Possessions, in order to the making to themselves Friends, and the laying up for themselves Treasures in Heaven. And this especially when the pressing necessities of the Church required it, when a large contribution was necessary towards the carrying on the great Work in which the Apostles were engaged, and the supplying the Wants of their Christian Brethren in all Places.

And perhaps this might be moreover design'd to mark out the most perfect way of living in this World, wherein men should be so utterly void of all selfishness and narrowness of Spirit, so unconcern'd for all private and separate Interests, as to be contented to live

live upon one common Stock, which should be equally employed, as occasion should be, for the good of every member of the Body.

But however that may be, thus their Charity is here described, which may suffice to be spoken to the *first* general Head which I proposed from the Words. I proceed to the *Second*, namely,

II. To enquire in what manner and degree Christians in every age ought to resemble those first Christians in the Characters which I have mention'd.

There can be no doubt, but that the nearer we come to the primitive pattern, the better Christians we are, what our blessed Saviour and his Apostles did being design'd as an instructive and obliging Example to the Church in all ages, wheresoever circumstances are the same.

As to Unanimity, it is remarkable, that when our Saviour pray'd that his Apostles might live in Unity, he immediately extended this Petition for *those also who should believe in him through their word*, and by consequence for *20, 21.* all those which should in future times believe in and profess his Name; thus emphatically expressing himself to his heavenly Father, *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me,*
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and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the World may believe that thou hast sent me. And this Prayer hath been heard with respect to the Spiritual Union of all the genuine and faithful Members of Christ's Body; although through the Wiles of the Devil, and the weakness and perverseness of men, the external Union and Communion of the Professors of Christianity have been long since and still are miserably broken.

There is nothing which the Apostles press more heartily and frequently upon the Christians to whom they wrote, than their *being like-minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus*; their glorifying God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, with one mind and one mouth; that they should all speak the same thing, that there should be no divisions among them, but that they should be perfectly join'd together in the same mind and in the same Judgment; and finally, that they should endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace. And indeed the nature of the Christian Body, the several ligaments wherewith the members of it are bound one to another, require that they should preserve the strictest Union with each other that is possible. So the Apostle reasons; *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism,*

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one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. It necessarily follows from hence, that all Christians should steadfastly adhere to the great and fundamental doctrines of the christian Faith, comprised in that form of sound words, which has been from the beginning the Symbol of Christianity, and that they should bear with one another in their differences about matters of less importance; that they should be ready to join with each other in all the Offices of christian Worship in every part of the World, wheresoever their lot shall be cast; and that they should all with one Heart and Soul endeavour to promote the interest of the whole body, and to advance the glory of God, by propagating the belief and practice of Christianity throughout the World. And thus it will be with Christians, when it shall please God again to pour out on his catholick Church the Spirit of primitive Christianity; when he shall have rooted out of it all Idolatry, Superstition and Tyranny, together with that secular, worldly Spirit that has so greatly prevail'd among Christians; when finally he shall encline the hearts both of the Governours and the private Members of the christian Body throughout the World, to reduce the christian Faith and Worship to its primitive Simplicity and Integrity, and to lay the stress of Religion

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more upon Practice than upon Profession. This is, in the mean time, what every sincere and good Christian should aim at, in imitation of the Pattern in my Text.

As to the other Character, of Charity, I have already observ'd, that the manner, in which the Christians of *Jerusalem* exercis'd it, was peculiar to them, and to the particular time in which they lived, and consequently is not propos'd as an Example to be strictly followed in every age and place. It hath pleas'd God by his Providence to order, that there should be several ranks and conditions of men in the world; and Christianity doth not alter the case, unless in such instances, where the circumstances of Christians proving like theirs who then dwelt at *Jerusalem*, should require a like practice. But how far their Charity ought to be an Example to Christians in general, is sufficiently intimated in those other Expressions in this Chapter, which I have already cited, viz. where it is said that *there*

Ver. 34.
35.

was not any among them that lacked; and again, that distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Thus far christian Charity ought to be extended in all places, and at all times, as far as it is within our power. 'Tis indeed what humane Nature, as well as our christian Profession, obliges us to, tho' the

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obligations arising from the latter are yet stronger than those from the former.

The bountiful Creator of all hath not been wanting to any of his Creatures. *The* ^{Psalms} *eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their* ^{145. 15.} ^{16.} *meat in due season. He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.* He hath made a plentiful provision for all Men: and if by his Providence his gifts are variously distributed, to some a larger, to some a smaller share, 'tis not, that some might live idly or luxuriously, whilst others want the necessaries of life; but that all the members of the great body of mankind might be useful one to another, that the abundance of some might supply the wants of others; that the wealthy might exercise their bounty and charity, and the poor their contentedness, their faith and trust in God, that both the one and the other might bless God for the good things they all enjoy'd, and that they might all of them glorify and serve him in the faithful discharge of the duties of their respective stations and functions: Those who abound in the good things of this life are always to consider themselves as the Stewards of Almighty God, to dispence his gifts to the indigent, and to remember that they must give a strict account of the management of this their Stewardship. They must

must make their poor Brethren partakers of their overplus, and must proportion this their Charity to the wants of all that are within their reach, every one contributing his share to the common Stock for the relief and supply of every one that stands in need. All this is so perfectly agreeable to the dictates of Reason, and the Precepts of Christianity dispers'd throughout the new Testament, that I need not insist on the proof of it.

Only let me add under this head, that, as this is the lowest proportion of christian Charity, to take care that *none among us do lack*, and that *distribution be made to every Man according as he has need*, so it well becomes a good Christian, from a sense of the divine Goodness and Mercy thro' Jesus Christ, and the Obligations laid upon him by the Gospel of our Saviour, and in hope of that great reward which our Saviour hath promis'd, still more and more, in proportion to the plenty with which God hath blessed him, to enlarge his liberality, and to become a more generous Benefactor to his christian Brethren; not only to supply their absolute necessities, but to increase the comforts of their lives, rendring them as easy as may be in this State of Life; and especially they are obliged to provide for their spiritual wants, as well as
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their temporal, and to take care that sufficient, nay plentiful means be allowed them for the instructing and improving their minds, and the directing and regulating their manners, and the rendering them as wise and as good as is possible. This cannot be doubted by any one who knows, as every Christian doth, that the Soul is infinitely more valuable than the Body, and the concerns of a future life infinitely more considerable than those of this present life. But this leads me to the next general head, *viz.*

III. To propose to you the Instance now before us, as a fair Specimen, a goodly Resemblance of the Temper and Practice which my Text mentions.

Behold therefore! between three and four thousand Children of both Sexes, and these either Orphans, or descended from Parents, who by reason of the Straitness of their circumstances were not able to give them such an Education as might be for their present improvement and their future comfort; behold them, I say, provided for both with respect to their temporal and their Spiritual necessities; rescued from ignorance and idleness, and as the consequence thereof, from vice and wickedness; most of them cloathed, and all of them

them instructed in order to their getting a comfortable subsistence in this World, and securing a well-being in the next ; taught to read, and write, and work ; inured to diligence and industry ; educated in the fear of almighty God ; taught the Principles of true Religion, and the way of worshiping God according to the Institution of our Redeemer ; exercised in praying to God, and singing Praises to his holy Name, and bearing their part with decency and reverence in the publick Assemblies of Christians: and all this done by Persons no way related to them, but as reasonable Creatures and Christians ; not by compulsion of any Law, but by a free and voluntary contribution ; not moved thereunto by solicitation and importunity from without, but by an inward inclination and desire to do good ; nay yet farther, by persons of differing persuasions with respect to some of the externals of Religion, but all agreeing in the fundamentals and essentials of Christianity, in the weighty matters of the Law, in loving God and our neighbour, and unanimously promoting the great Interest of our common christian Profession.

Consider this whole Assembly as met together, I trust, with unity of heart and Soul, to render our devotions to almighty God in the
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Name of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, to give him thanks for his Grace bestowed upon us, and to beseech him to bless and prosper the good work which is before us: Doth not this look very like one of the Assemblies of Christians in the Apostles days, where nothing appear'd but plain simple Christianity, Piety towards God, and good-will towards men, *praising God with gladness and singleness of heart, and exercising Charity towards all our Brethren*, where all selfishness and narrowness of Spirit seem to be discarded, all divisions and distinctions laid aside, all endeavouring to approve themselves children of God, disciples of his Son Jesus, and followers of the Apostles and first Christians? May it not be justly said in this case, as it was in my Text, that *the Multitude of those that believe among us, are of one heart and of one soul; and that none of us says, that ought of the things which he possesses is absolutely his own, but that we have all things so far common, as that none among us do lack, but distribution is made to every one according as he has need?*

I am sure we have in this instance, a much fairer resemblance of the state of the Primitive Church, than that which is given us by that deluded and wretched Sect, who, tho' they have thrown off the very Badges of Christia-

nity, and allegoriz'd away the very letter of the Gospel, yet pretend to a peculiar degree of Inspiration, and under that pretence probably have pitch'd upon this very Season for their anniversary general Assembly.

But to proceed: This was in those primitive Christians the Effect of the divine Spirit descending upon them. And what reason can there be to question, whether the same temper and practice do now proceed from the same Spirit? *The promise, viz. of the gift of the holy Ghost,* Acts 2. 39. was, as St. Peter declares, *to them and to their children, and to all that were afar off, even as many as the Lord our God should call,* and certainly that Spirit is to be known by its fruits. Now we are sure that godly love and peace, christian unanimity and charity, are eminent Effects and Fruits of the divine Spirit. God is the God of peace and love, and wheresoever his Spirit prevaieth among men, their Souls are fill'd with these heavenly Qualities. Contention and division are the works of the Devil, and carry in them the exprefs Characters of that evil Spirit. But the Spirit of Christ, who came to destroy the works of the Devil, is a calm and benign, a gentle and a loving Spirit, infusing Concord and Charity, into all those Minds in which it is admitted to take up its residence. Blessed be almighty God who
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hath poured out such a Spirit upon us at this time.

And why may we not from hence be led to hope, that these may be the happy beginnings of the advancement of the Kingdom of God and Christ upon Earth? The progress of Christianity at the first was not more certainly owing to the mighty Works which were wrought by the Apostles, thro' the power of the holy Ghost descending upon them, than to the other admirable fruits of the same Spirit, particularly that excellent Temper and Practice which it produced in the first Converts.

We have indeed at this time a loud and just complaint of the abounding of infidelity and iniquity among us: but there is also, thanks be to God, another and a better Spirit moving vigorously at the same time, to the great satisfaction and pleasure of all good Christians. I might here reckon up several excellent designs which have been set on foot of late years, begun by several pious and serious Persons forming themselves into Societies for the mutual assistance of each other, carried on with great zeal and diligence, and I believe with much purity of Intention, and I may add with as few Errors or Faults as could be expected where so many persons are concern'd. Such for Instance have been the Attempts

made for Reformation of manners; which have not been without a considerable Effect, the removing many Occasions of, and Temptations to vice and wickedness, the reclaiming some, and the restraining many more, and particularly the prevailing with Authority to prevent those publick Rendezvous of Impiety and Lewdness, which had been too long permitted, to the scandal of this and the neighbouring City.

Such again have been the Endeavours used for promoting christian Knowledge and Piety throughout the whole Kingdom, by dispersing plain and useful Books amongst the common people, by providing parochial Libraries for the poorer Clergy, (a design encouraged by a late Act of Parliament) and especially by setting up and encouraging Charity-Schools for the educating the children of the poor.

To these are to be added, that truly christian design of propagating the Gospel in foreign parts, by sending Ministers and good Books amongst our Plantations, to which purpose a Corporation has been establish'd by Royal Charter; as also the erecting another Corporation, by the singular Piety and Goodness of her present Majesty, for the relief of the poor Clergy, to whom she hath freely parted with what was by Law invested in her, to enable

enable and encourage the Ministers of the Establish'd Church to attend their great work chearfully and without distraction.

God hath indeed, over and above all that I have already mention'd, given us singular Pledges of his favour towards us ; particularly in making this Kingdom a place of Refuge for so many thousand distressed Persons and Families, especially Protestants who have suffer'd persecution in their own Countries, or been forced out of them for their Profession, and have fled hither to partake of our Protection and Charity ; a *Blessedness* in our Saviour's account, more considerable to the *Giver* than to the *Receiver*.

Moreover, in recollecting the special favours of God towards us, we ought not to forget those, of his raising up a Deliverer for us, I mean our late King of glorious Memory, in the day of our danger ; of his preserving us in peace amongst our selves, whilst we have been engaged in a tedious and dangerous War with foreign Enemies ; of his giving us many eminent deliverances at home, as well as successes abroad, and at present a good hope and prospect of seeing our great Enemy, the common Oppressor, humbled, and a lasting peace settled ; (to which 'tis to be hoped the fervent and joint Prayers of this Congregation

gregation may greatly conduce;) and finally of his placing upon the Throne at this time so Eminent an Example of Piety and Virtue, under whose Government, and by whose Encouragement, we have ground to hope for a successful Progress of all those good designs which have been undertaken amongst us: For all which Blessings as we have great reason to magnify the goodness of God, so we should be encouraged thereby to place our hope and trust in him, and to proceed chearfully and vigorously in the good works in which we are engaged; which leads me to what I propos'd in the last place, *viz.*

IV. To conclude this Discourse with such Exhortation and Advice as may be suitable to the present Occasion.

I. Let me therefore in the *first* place exhort those, who are not yet engaged in this good work, to consider the usefulness of it, and to study to promote it according to their several abilities.

I mean not, by recommending this one Instance of Charity, to divert you from any other proper methods of exercising the same Virtue, 'tho' amongst all others I know

know not any one more necessary or useful than this.

The general Rule of our Charity is that which I have insisted upon, to take care that none among us should want any thing that is necessary, or truly expedient for Soul or Body. The Objects before us are such, as would suffer extream want in both these respects, without charitable assistance. A good Education is, next to the grace of God in Jesus Christ, the choicest Blessing which men partake of in this life. 'Tis that which cultivates our natural Endowments, rectifies the corrupt propensions of Nature, and for the most part lays the foundation of all future Virtue and Happiness. The innocent and tender age of Children demands our especial care. Our blessed Lord and Master, when his Disciples thought them not worthy of his concern, express a very tender regard towards them, representing them as Patterns to all those who desired to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And as the children of the poor stand in need of our assistance, so they are as capable of a good Education, I mean such as may render them virtuous and useful, as those of the rich; insomuch that many of that sort have attain'd the highest Improvements, and have been in several Stations,
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some of the most useful Persons in the Kingdom. And as they are the special Objects of his care who patronizeth and provideth for the Fartherless and Widow, the distressed and destitute of all sorts ; so those who profess themselves to be the Children of this heavenly Father, ought to shew a special concern for them. We are sure, that their Souls are as precious in the sight of God, as the Souls of the wealthiest or greatest Persons in the world ; they are equally the purchase of our Redeemer, and equally capable of the Grace and the Happiness which he hath procured for mankind.

I need not recommend to you the Method in which children are educated in these Schools ; 'tis evidently that which directly tends to the qualifying them for living comfortably and usefully in this World, and happily in the World to come. 'Tis the preparing them first to be good Servants, and many of them, 'tis to be hop'd, in time as good Masters and Mistresses ; and by consequence 'tis the doing good not only to the present Generation, but to those that are future, by laying a foundation for piety and virtue, for honesty and industry in the ages to come ; it being a reasonable expectation, that many of those who are thus educated, will
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not only prove useful Members of our Kingdom and our Church themselves, but will moreover think themselves under a peculiar obligation to propagate christian Knowledge and Virtue to their Posterity.

This therefore must needs be accounted one of those good Works, which are acceptable to God, and approv'd of Men, and which will yield great satisfaction and pleasure to them that are exercised in it. It will do so at the present, every Act of Beneficence and Charity being extremely grateful to the mind of a good man; and it will do so yet more, when they shall see the work prosper in their hands, when they shall behold many of those, whom they have thus charitably taken care of, growing up and thriving like plants of their own setting, spreading their branches, and bringing forth variety of good Fruits.

But I will say no more on this Head, not doubting but that the pleasing sight of this beautiful Assembly will of it self powerfully excite the Hearts of those who behold it. Let me only add, that there is still room for the enlarging our present Charity, even where a sufficient number of Schools may be already set up, by proceeding in what has happily been begun, I mean in placing out to Apprenticeships and Services in honest and sober families, such
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children of both Sexes as have been thus educated. As it will be a considerable instance of Charity both in those that place out, and in those that receive such children into their Families ; so I take the way in which they are educated to be the likeliest Method for making them prove a Blessing to the Families into which they are receiv'd. But,

2. Let me add a word of Exhortation to those also who are already engaged in the good work before us, and that is, that you would persevere in it with resolution and constancy.

You have very great Encouragement to this purpose, when you consider from what small beginnings so great an increase and improvement has been made, and that in so short a space of time. This we may reasonably conclude is the hand of God, it proceeds from his Blessing upon your pious and charitable undertaking, and to him the Praise is to be ascribed, who hath not only infused into so many Minds the true ancient Spirit of Christianity, the same which inspired the Apostles and first Christians, but hath also given so great success to your Endeavours. And we ought to make it our fervent prayer to God, that he will still pour out more of the same Spirit upon his Church throughout the world, making

making the members of it every where fruitful in all good works.

But here, my Brethren, give me leave seriously to advise you, not as jealous lest you should do otherwise, but as sensible of the weakness of humane nature, and as considering the subtilty of our spiritual Adversary, who will not fail to use his utmost endeavours to blast all such excellent designs as this; let me therefore, I say, advise you to carry on this charitable work always, as you have begun, with great Humility, and with perfect Unanimity.

Let your Humility always manifest it self, in ascribing the praise and glory of all the good you do, and all the success you have to God alone, who hath vouchsafed to make you his Instruments for the benefit of your poor Brethren; saying, according to our blessed Saviour's Admonition, *When we have* Luk. 17.
done all, we are unprofitable Servants; we have 10.
done that which was our duty to do. Let it be farther manifested in all dutiful regard and deference to your Superiours both in Church and State, and in a readiness to comply with all directions given by them; nay even to hearken to any wholsom advice, by whomsoever it may be offer'd, for the prudent and successful

successful management of the business before you.

Let your Unanimity also be testified by your pursuing your design *with one heart and one soul*, carefully avoiding all beginnings and all occasions of contention amongst yourselves, and utterly banishing all Names of Distinction from among you.

We live in an age, wherein divisions abound, and that not only between persons of different persuasions in Religion, but even between those of the same Communion. The design which we are here pursuing has a natural tendency to unite the serious and pious of different persuasions amongst us, namely, the teaching the avowed Principles of our common Christianity, together with the practice of Piety and Virtue in the unquestionable instances thereof. And I know nothing more likely to unite us, than the zealous Prosecution of such a design; as at the same time nothing could so effectually and certainly defeat our endeavours in this case, as the espousing or promoting any particular Party or Faction.

Let there be therefore no manner of contention found amongst you, unless it be, who shall most zealously and steadily prosecute the design in which you are engaged, in methods

thods thorowly approv'd by all. Beware of any thing that may look like Innovation, of any thing that may give the least just offence or jealousy to any wise or good Christian. Oblige those, to whom you commit the care of the children, to adhere strictly to that Method of Instruction in the principles of Religion which our Church hath prescribed in her plain, short and excellent Catechism, adding nothing thereto, unless it be some known and approv'd Exposition thereof; that they be made to understand the Nature and Obligation of their baptismal Vow; that they may know the Articles of the christian Faith as comprised in the Apostles Creed; that they may learn their duty towards God and towards their Neighbour as taught in the ten Commandments, explain'd after the tenor of our Saviour's Gospel; that they may be taught to pray, as our Lord taught his Disciples; that they may be instructed in the Nature and Use of the two Sacraments instituted by our Saviour; and finally, as the result of this knowledge, that they may be early initiated in the practice of all those duties which make up a sober, righteous and godly Life.

3. But this leads me to conclude all with a short and serious address to those who are
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immediately imployed in the education of these Children, the Masters and Mistresses of the Charity-Schools.

All that I shall say to you is, that those worthy Persons who employ you do reasonably expect; nay God himself, to whom you must give an account of the management of your trust, doth expect, both that you should your selves give an Example of all manner of Piety and Virtue, and that you should apply your selves with much diligence and prudence to the forming the tempers and manners of the children committed to your care, as well as to the informing their understandings, attending your business not as those that would please men only, but would approve your selves in the sight of God. Teach them to be modest and humble, diligent and industrious, and above all perfectly true and just both in word and deed. Insinuate into them a sense of almighty God, and the apprehension of a future life. Endeavour to awaken their consciences in these their tender Years, that they may act upon Principles all the days of their lives. Give them an early value for their Bibles, that they may ever look upon them as containing the great Rule of their Faith and Practice, that Rule by which they are to live, and by which

which they shall be judged. In a word, manage them as Parents should do, (for you are in the place of Parents to them,) with that Prudence that may engage them both to fear and love you, as being convinc'd by your behaviour towards them, that you have no other design but to promote their temporal and spiritual welfare. You are well employed, engaged in an excellent Work, highly acceptable to God, and useful to the World, if managed as it ought to be; and if you do your part with fidelity and diligence, besides the present small recompence which you receive for your pains, you will enjoy the satisfaction of a good Conscience, from a sense of having done your duty; you will very often have the pleasure of observing the good Effects of your care in the towardliness and the improvement of your Charge; and you will finally receive a full recompence from God at the great day of account.

May almighty God continue to prosper this Work; may he shour down his Blessings abundantly both spiritual and temporal upon all that are heartily engaged in it; may he bless these Children, and give them grace always to remember the Obligations they are laid under by this kind dispensation of his Providence towards them; may he by the

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grace

grace of his holy Spirit conduct us all in the paths of Wisdom, Piety and Virtue, till he shall have brought us to his heavenly Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with the Father and the Eternal Spirit, our great Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, be ascribed all praise and glory now and for ever. Amen.


F I N I S.